



# CORDELL BANK NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

## Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

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**August 8, 2013**

9:35am – 2:00pm

Point Blue Conservation Science, Petaluma, CA

Note: The following meeting notes are an account of discussions at the Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

### **Welcome**

Advisory Council Chair, George Clyde, called the meeting to order at 9:35am

### **Roll Call**

#### Members present:

George Clyde (Chair, Community-at-Large Marin)  
Jaime Jahncke (Research)  
Pete Adams (Research Alt.)  
Todd Steiner (Conservation Alt.)  
John Berge (Maritime Activities Alt.)  
Mike Cummings (Community-at-Large Marin Alt.)  
Bill Wolpert (Community-at-Large Sonoma)  
Sarah Hameed (Community-at-Large Sonoma Alt.)  
Cody Dunagan (United States Coast Guard)  
Joseph Giammanco (United States Coast Guard)

#### CBNMS staff:

Dan Howard (Superintendent)  
Kaitlin Graiff (Advisory Council Coordinator, Research Specialist)  
Jennifer Stock (Education and Outreach Coordinator)  
Michael Carver (Deputy Superintendent)  
Lilli Ferguson (Resource Protection Specialist)

### **Review Agenda**

The agenda was unanimously approved

### **Review of April Minutes**

The April 25, 2013 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved with no changes. George motions to adopt April minutes as final, Pete approves, Bill seconds, all in favor

#### ***April minutes accepted as final***

### **Superintendent's Report (Dan Howard)**

- i. Ocean conditions are good with early season productivity. It is a banner year for young of year (YOY) rockfish recruitment. Species composition is very diverse and early season salmon were feeding on YOYs.
- ii. The Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is in the middle of conducting the five year review of Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). Proposals to modify or add EFH areas were due July 31. Olympic Coast, Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries submitted proposals to the PFMC to add new

EFH areas. Cordell Bank and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuaries asked to keep status quo for existing EFH. Dan discussed the EFH closures in CBNMS on the map: the 50 fathom closure is a no bottom contact EFH and the area that looks like a butterfly is a no trawl EFH. There was a proposal submitted by a third party to open some of the no-trawl area within each leg of the butterfly.

- iii. Facilities – CBNMS office and staff are moving within the Point Reyes National Seashore headquarters.
- iv. The Cordell Bank Research Coordinator position is being filled by Dani Lipski who is the research specialist from Channel Islands NMS.
- v. Budget – wrapping up the fiscal year. Expect a continuing resolution in the first quarter of next year.

#### **Research Report (Kaitlin Graiff)**

- i. BAUE dive mission planning - In January, CBNMS was contacted by a member from the Bay Area Underwater Explorers (BAUE) inquiring about diving on Cordell Bank. In July Dan and I met with three members of BAUE to discuss logistics for the dive expedition on Cordell Bank they are planning for October. BAUE is a group of technical divers that complete deep dives (140-200ft) nearly every weekend in the Monterey Bay area. Members of their group have a strong interest in marine science. Their team has also been involved in citizen science data collection programs. We discussed previous dive missions on Cordell Bank and logistics. BAUE will be transiting their dive vessel up from Monterey and have a 10 day weather window in October to complete 3-4 dive days. The structure of this year's plan is to first determine the feasibility of their group diving Cordell Bank (costs and logistics). They will be collecting underwater photos and video for CBNMS and if this year is a success, we talked about developing a sampling plan where the divers can relocate a specific site to monitor change in species over time. This monitoring plan could focus on the hydrocoral *Stylaster* or other species to detect change in ocean conditions.
- ii. ROV cruise planning - CBNMS is moving along with planning for the October ROV cruise to characterize the invertebrate community on the Bank. The cruise will employ the expertise of West Coast Sanctuary Staff, the Sanctuaries ROV and the R/V Fulmar.

#### **Education Report (Jenny Stock)**

- i. Hosted teacher workshop this summer that focused on the Winged Ambassadors curriculum. Workshop was held at the Oakland museum and they also did a boat trip out to the Farallon Islands to see albatross.
- ii. The Monterey Bay Aquarium invited Jenny to their ocean plastic summit.
- iii. Teacher from Berkeley high school was the NOAA Teacher at Sea on the July Applied California Current Ecosystem Studies (ACCESS) cruise.
- iv. CBNMS is sponsoring the student film competition at the San Francisco International Ocean Film Festival for the second year.
- v. Two field seminars to Cordell Bank are scheduled on Aug 25<sup>th</sup> and Sept 8<sup>th</sup>. These are full day trips departing from Bodega Bay.
- vi. Cordell Bank photo exhibit is still up in the Pt. Reyes library. Jenny needs other ideas of where to put the images. Next two stops are Stinson Beach library this winter and Copper field in Petaluma this spring. Other potential places are the Bay Model and Cal Academy.

#### **Resource Protection (Michael Carver)**

- i. Changes to the San Francisco vessel traffic lanes took place on August 1<sup>st</sup>. NOAA charts have been updated.
- ii. Two dead whales were reported this season. One whale was entangled in fishing gear and one had high abundance of parasites in its gut.

- iii. Spotter app – was released on iTunes at the end of June. Point Blue Conservation Science is requesting donations of iPhone 3G or later versions to provide to mariners and naturalists to record data using the app. An account needs to be established to use the app. Sightings data will eventually be posted on the Whale Aware website. Currently three shipping companies are collecting data; Chevron is interested. John Berge noted that the app may not be the best option for the ships since they are often outside the range for transmitting.
- iv. Michael conducted an over flight of the traffic lanes with the United States Coast Guard to verify reports of high abundance of whales in the region. A local notice to mariners about the large abundance of whales is being broadcast. There is also the ability to text ships the notice.
- v. Caitlin Jensen is a NOAA Nancy Foster Scholar and has been analyzing 2009 and 2010 AIS data. She has the skill set to analyze AIS data to answer complex vessel questions that will be the basis of her master's research.
- vi. Cordell Bank buoy is being pulled out due to reduced funding. This has been a long time partnership with the Bodega Marine Lab.

**Boundary Expansion Update (Lilli Ferguson)**

- i. We are continuing to draft documents for the proposed CBNMS and GFNMS expansion. We are completing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, updated management plans, a proposed rule, and revised terms of designation. The plan is to release these documents for public comment this winter. There will be a series of public meetings to take comment after the documents are released.
- ii. As Dan reported at the previous SAC meeting, Lilli will be taking on the SAC coordinator duties next fiscal year.

**National Marine Sanctuaries Condition Report 2013 (Kaitlin Graiff)**

Kaitlin summarized the National Condition Report: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/library/pdfs/ncr2013.pdf>

Since 2006 the Sanctuary Program has been developing a process for preparing condition reports using a combination of data and expert opinion. After completing a report for all 14 units of the NMS system the National Condition report was just completed, which evaluates pressures, conditions, and management responses across the system. The purpose of the report is to inform ONMS and its partners on priority issues and challenges facing the 13 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument as a system, and to discuss actions to address them. Together with site-based reports, the National Condition Report will help direct the course of development and support for conservation science across the national system. The hope is these reports become an integral part of the management plan development process at each sanctuary, and in doing that, influence action plans for conservation science, education, outreach, and other management programs

Condition Reports help identify gaps in monitoring activities at sites around the nation. . The next round of condition reports have improved questions that will take into account the feedback received from groups like the Channel Islands Research Activities Panel that stressed that expert opinion is no substitute for data. We are improving the way we document uncertainty so experts are more comfortable judging conditions and we are better coordinating the timing of the reports with that of the management plan updates for the sanctuaries.

### **Sanctuary Nomination and Evaluation Process (Dan Howard)**

- i. Dan explained the recent federal register notice that is open to public comment on the 12 proposed criteria for nominating a National Marine Sanctuary. Dan reviewed the 12 criteria with the Council.
- ii. The Cordell Bank Sanctuary Advisory Council wrote a letter of support to reactivate the NMS site evaluation process, but the Council has not evaluated the 12 nomination criteria. This process is the beginning to create a new list of candidate sites.
- iii. Comments can be made in writing or electronically. Closing date is August 27<sup>th</sup>. Kaitlin will distribute the instructions for providing comments and the Federal Register noticed with the 12 criteria.

### **Cordell Marine Sanctuary Foundation (CMSF) Update (Tom Lambert)**

CMSF actions and activities:

- i. Signed onto a letter circulated by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation to support the Sanctuary evaluation process.
- ii. Submitted comments on the proposed rule to expand the Thunder Bay NMS.
- iii. In May signed a Memorandum of Agreement with CBNMS; it spells out the relationship and responsibilities to each other.
- iv. On May 28<sup>th</sup>, Patty Fata and Tom attended the SF Bay chapter of the American Cetacean Society's Ship Strike panel presentation.
- v. Liza Crosse and Patty Fata attended the May 31 grand opening of the Cordell Bank exhibit at the Oakland Museum of California. Liza reported the event was a delight. Dan did a great job speaking at the opening ceremony. Congratulations go to Jenny for her success and 8 years of work.
- vi. On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Patty Fata and Tom attended the opening reception of the Cordell Bank photo exhibit at the Pt. Reyes Station library.
- vii. CMSF will participate with Point Blue Conservation Science and other non-profits fundraising for the Whale Aware project.
- viii. The National Environmental Education Foundation awarded CMSF a \$5,000 grant to develop an education and user friendly website. Almost 160 applications were submitted and 25 grants were awarded.
- ix. Planning is underway for the CMSF Board and Directors retreat on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **Advisory Council Business (Kaitlin Graiff)**

- i. Recruiting for fishing primary and alternate seats, education alternate. Stay tuned for the announcement to spread the word.
- ii. Asked Council about the amount of email traffic. I will begin to send out email announcements specific to CBNMS and no longer have Leslie include CB Council Members on the GFNMS distribution emails.

### **Presentation: Data summaries from year one surveys assessing the response of rockfish populations to Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) closures in Central California (Dan Howard)**

Dan presented a Power Point presentation provided by project researchers from Moss Landing Marine Laboratories.

In summary:

- i. The anglers sampled in areas that are open and closed to fishing in Half Moon Bay and near the Farallon Islands and sampled only in closed areas on Cordell Bank.
- ii. Historic data show an average catch of 9 fish per hour. The figures show the 2012 catch effort is much higher at Cordell Bank. Also fish lengths are consistently larger at Cordell Bank than in Half Moon Bay and Farallones. Pete noted that fish lengths are often larger at deeper depths.

- iii. The project will sample three more times this year in September.
- iv. Overall, the data indicate that rockfish populations at Cordell Bank are rebounding from historic numbers.

#### **Public Comment**

None

#### **Member Reports**

*John Berge*— presented a poster to be placed on the bridge of ships with whale identification images and how to report whale sightings. The PDF is available on the web: [www.PMSAship.com](http://www.PMSAship.com)

*Sarah Hameed*— Sonoma County is banning plastic bags. Sonoma County Supervisors rejected the use of Iron Rangers at Sonoma State Parks and the State Parks will soon be making a final decision. White abalone project at BML has gotten attention. Sarah will keep distributing the list of BML seminar series. Researchers at the lab are forming a Coastal Science Marine Institute. The institute will be interdisciplinary with a focus on applied conservation science for management. There is potential for the institute to partner with Sanctuaries and other science/policy agencies in area. CAMEOS is finishing its final year.

*Jaime Jahncke* — Environmental Impact Statement for the mouse eradication on the Farallones comes out soon. Hosting a workshop on forage fish during the first week of September with researchers and managers on forage fish and how to move from single species to ecosystem based management. Jaime ran through the July ACCESS photos on the Facebook page and mentioned that the net samples did not have much krill, more gelatinous animals.

*George Clyde*—Following up on Bob Schmieder's discovery of the mysterious holes on Cordell Bank. Filed a freedom of information act for historic data from the Navy for information on what the holes are from. The thought is they are part of an old Navy project to listen for submarines and speculation is the holes housed batteries to power the hydrophones.

Meeting adjourned at 2pm.